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Short Notices of Books *Natural and Supernatural: A History of the Paranormal from Earliest Times to 1914*. By Brian Inglis. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977. Pp. 490. £9.95.

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behalf of Planck, which seemed to me to verge at times on the disingenuous. Klein's account of Einstein's introduction of photons seemed to me to contain sins of omission rather than of commission. There are major difficulties with Einstein's argument which apparently went unnoticed at the time, and remain unnoticed by Klein. For example one of Einstein's equations (which Klein quotes without comment) *prima facie* equates a finite quantity to an infinitesimal quantity to a negative infinite quantity. Still more seriously, *most* of Einstein's symbols changed their physical meaning during the course of his argument. (For example the E which Einstein concludes is equal to an integral multiple of $h\nu$ was introduced by him as an average energy and so certainly cannot satisfy this condition.) I am unable to repair Einstein's argument. Not noticing these difficulties, Klein, on the other hand, worries over an obvious gap at the end of Einstein's argument, when that gap has already been repaired in the literature by a rigorous measure-theoretic argument. Clearly in this field even the best contemporary historians fall far short of providing the kind of uncompromising analytical critique which scientist and philosopher readers require, and which a nineteenth-century historian such as Todhunter would certainly have provided. Klein's papers are the best we have in this field.

Two of the longer papers in the volume, Elkana on 'The historical roots of modern physics' and Goldstein on 'Science, politics and international affairs', present global syntheses. In both cases, in spite of the extensive documentation the authors provided for their contentions, I remained thoroughly unconvinced of the usefulness of their particular global perspectives. Elkana's perspective seemed, in several of his examples with which I was familiar, far from illuminating the classical papers he discussed, to have distorted his own appreciation of them. I several times came close to doubting that he had read and understood the paper he was discussing (even the 1847 paper of Helmholtz, on which Elkana has published in many places). Again I did not find Goldstein's paper illuminated any episodes of which I had direct knowledge: it read more like a left-wing fantasy. In spite of the intelligence, sincerity, and scholarship that both these authors display, actual history does not seem to me to lend itself to the kind of simple and illuminating overview that they attempt to provide.

Finally the volume includes three useful papers which are however available in more extended forms elsewhere: Rossi, 'From Bruno to Kepler: man's position in the cosmos'; Sherwin, 'Niels Bohr and the atomic bomb'; and Kowarski, 'New forms of organization in physical research after 1945'.

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◀ SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS ▶

Natural and Supernatural: A History of the Paranormal from Earliest Times to 1914. By Brian Inglis. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977. Pp. 490. £9.95.

Brian Inglis has written a very full historical account of man's attention to psychical phenomena—encompassing loosely telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis—stopping abruptly with the First World War. It is a thoroughly serious study, and bears comparison with two other recent books with which it overlaps to a degree: Alan Gauld's *The founders of psychical research* (London, 1968), and R. Laurence Moore's *In search of white crows* (New York,

1977). Inglis's account lacks the emphasis on intellectual and cultural analysis of the other two, but it provides what they do not: a detailed examination of the cases which have served psychical researchers for evidence. It offers a conscientious survey of the phenomena presented from early civilizations, but is at its most fascinating (and most comprehensive) in treating the period from Mesmer to the end of the nineteenth century, which occupies two-thirds of the book. Inglis's terminus in 1914, the threshold of university attention to psychical research (at first at Harvard and at Stanford, and subsequently at Duke), is an entirely reasonable one.

It is also reasonable, I believe, for Inglis to have chosen to 'work within a hypothetical paradigm, writing on an "as if" assumption—the events being related *as if* they may have occurred'. Granted, the result is implicitly a partisan account, but it is well worth the historian's while to have a detailed presentation of the accumulated evidence as it has won over psychical researchers. Inglis's use of the term 'paradigm' is a self-conscious one; he cites T. S. Kuhn to explain why orthodox scientists have chosen to ignore or to disdain the evidence he sets forth. But it is also true that a reader of Inglis's book will acquire an excellent understanding of the frame of mind of the informed psychical researcher in the early twentieth century (my own feeling is that the field was then still essentially 'pre-paradigmatic').

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Isaac Newton's papers and letters on natural philosophy. Edited by I. B. Cohen. 2nd edn. Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard University Press, 1978. Pp. 450 + xii. £18.55.

The new edition of this well known book remains unchanged as regards the Newton papers and letters reproduced, and their various explanatory prefaces. But a new general introduction has been provided by the editor I. B. Cohen in the light of the considerable advances in Newton scholarship since the appearance of the first edition in 1958. Other new features are a supplement to the original bibliographical notes of R. E. Schofield, and a useful set of textual notes. Since its original publication in 1958 *Isaac Newton's papers and letters on natural philosophy* has become a standard work in constant demand by Newtonian students and scholars, and this new edition, long overdue, is very welcome.

J. W. HERIVEL

Oxford

Antique Medical Instruments. By Elisabeth Bennion. London: Sotheby Parke Bernet; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979. Pp. xii + 355. 16 colour plates. £28.

Antique medical instruments is an expensive, glossy guide to medical objects of the past, viewed from an aesthetic angle—an angle obtuse enough to incorporate everything from the castrating-clamp to the balling-gun (an instrument for shooting pills down an animal's throat). The fifteen unreferenced chapters cover most objects associated with medicine in the West from medieval times to the mid-nineteenth century. The pages are punctuated with many extremely good black and white and coloured plates. It is thus an excellent book to browse